



VA Midwest Health Care Network

Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23



ANNUAL REPORT

Fiscal Year 2005



January 2006

Director's Message



VA Midwest Health Care Network, also known as the Veterans Integrated Service Network (VISN) 23, is pleased to present its 2005 annual report. The report is produced to provide an overview of our work. It includes information on our demographics, overall performance, strategic initiatives, and future focus.

There are over 9,000 dedicated and highly trained VA employees who make up our Network's health care team. Every day, these dedicated professionals reaffirm their commitment to improve veterans' health and well being.

It is a privilege to serve our Nation's veterans and on behalf of our entire staff, we wish you a New Year filled with blessings and good health.

Robert A. Petzel, M.D.
Network Director

Mission, Vision, Core Values, Priorities

Our mission, vision, values, and strategic priorities are statements that guide Network leaders and employees as they care for veterans and plan for the future.

Mission - Honor America's veterans by providing exceptional health care that improves their health and well-being.

Vision – To be a patient centered, integrated health care organization for veterans providing excellence in health care, research, and education; an organization where people choose to work; an active community partner and a backup for National emergencies.

Core Values

Trust
Respect
Excellence
Compassion
Commitment
Empowerment
Continuous Improvement
Collaboration



Veteran athlete returns volley during table tennis competition at the 25th National Veterans Wheelchair Games held in Minneapolis, Minnesota June 29-July 1, 2005.

Strategic Planning Priorities – In 2005, the Executive Leadership Council adopted five strategic planning priorities:

- Build a Culture of Continuous Quality Improvement
- Implement a Care Coordination Program
- Fully implement Advanced Clinic Access
- Prepare for Workforce Replacement
- Implement a Utilization Management Program

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Overview of the Network

VA Midwest Health Care Network is one of twenty-one Veterans Integrated Service Networks (VISN) within the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA). This Network oversees the provision of health care provided to veterans residing in Iowa, Minnesota, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota and bordering states of Kansas, Illinois, Missouri, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

Also known as VISN 23, the Network delivers VA's comprehensive benefits package through an integrated system of medical centers (8), community based outpatient clinics (CBOC) (35), domiciliaries (4), and nursing home care units (7). Together, we are a team of professionals that serve America's veterans.

Resource Comparisons

VISN 23	2004	2005
Budget	\$1.2B	\$1.3B
Medical Care Cost Recovery	\$125M	\$142M
Staff Level (FTE)	9,082	9,277

VHA Full Time Equivalent Employees	2004	2005
Fargo	630	641
Central Iowa	1160	1179
Iowa City	1001	1036
Nebraska-W Iowa	1313	1326
Sioux Falls	634	647
St. Cloud	908	941
Black Hills	932	954
Minneapolis	2504	2553
Total Network 23	9082	9277

Workload Comparisons

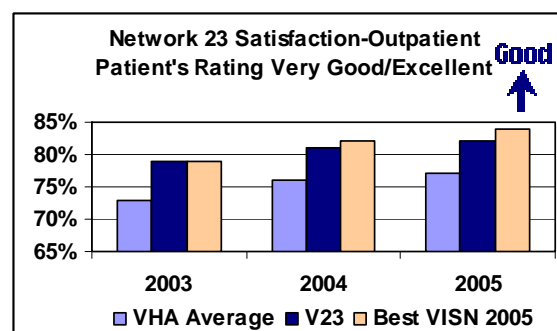
VISN 23	FY04 Totals	FY05 Totals	% change
Inpatient discharges	25,499	23,529	(7.7)%
Opt. Visits	2,268,717	2,349,603	3.6 %
Veterans Treated	249,160	254,673	2.2 %
▪ Priority 1-6	166,947	172,898	3.6 %
▪ Priority 7-8	82,213	81,775	(.5) %

Satisfaction

VA Midwest Health Care Network is a leader in patient satisfaction on both inpatient and outpatient surveys as reported on the Survey of Healthcare Experiences of Patients (SHEP). "Putting veterans first" is not just a saying, it is the way we do business. Medical Centers that consistently sustain top 10 scores in SHEP survey results include the VA Black Hills Health Care System and the St. Cloud VA Medical Center.

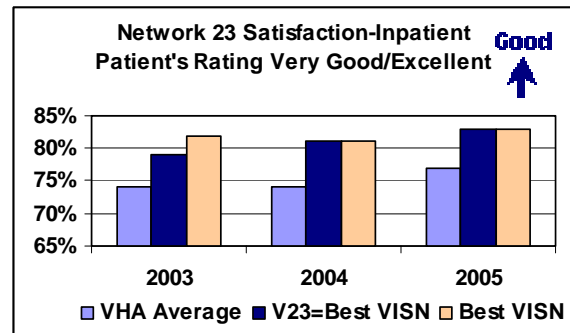
Since 2002, the **St. Cloud VA Medical Center (VAMC)** and the **VA Black Hills Health Care System (HCS)** have maintained patient satisfaction scores well above the national averages. In 2002, the St. Cloud VAMC ranked among the top ten facilities in the nation in eight of thirteen patient satisfaction categories. In 2004, the facility tied for second place and

scores exceeded network and national averages in all areas measured, and were particularly outstanding for quality of care and access to care.



In 2004, there were thirteen outpatient satisfaction standards measured. VA Black Hills

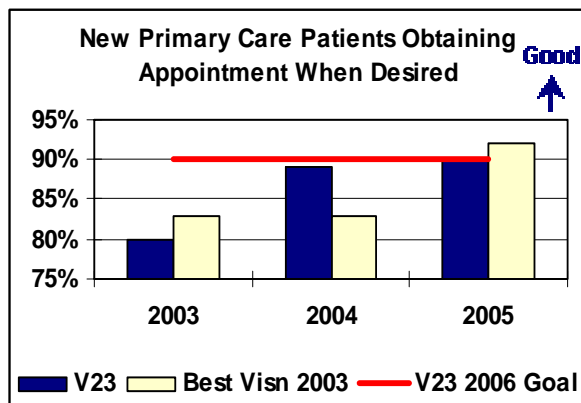
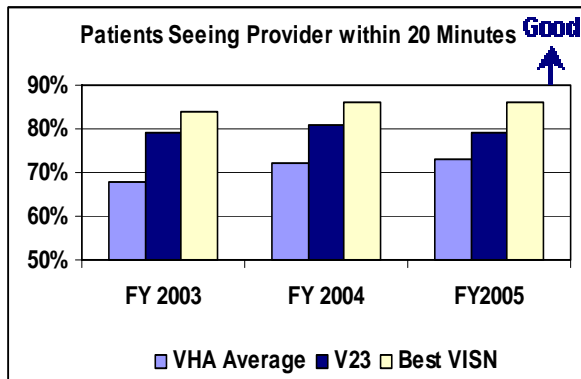
HCS was a top ten performer in eleven of the thirteen standards measured. The next best performer nationally was Columbus, Ohio VA Outpatient Clinic, placing in the top ten in eight of the thirteen standards. Also in 2004, the Hot Springs campus of VA Black Hills HCS was a top ten performer in nine of ten inpatient satisfaction standards, ranking number one in the nation. VA Black Hills consistently scores well above the national and VISN averages in patient satisfaction.



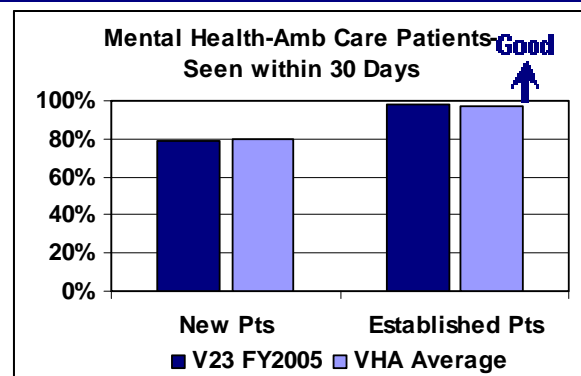
Access

Advanced Clinic Access – All of our clinics have been participating in initiatives to improve access to clinic visits for veterans. Below are a few examples that measure our progress over the last three fiscal years in the area of access. Providing improved access to medical care will continue to be an improvement focus for the Network in the coming year.

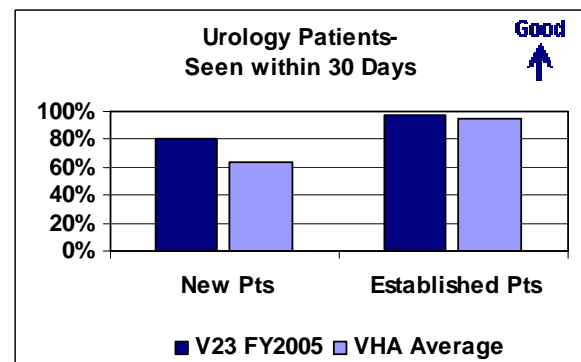
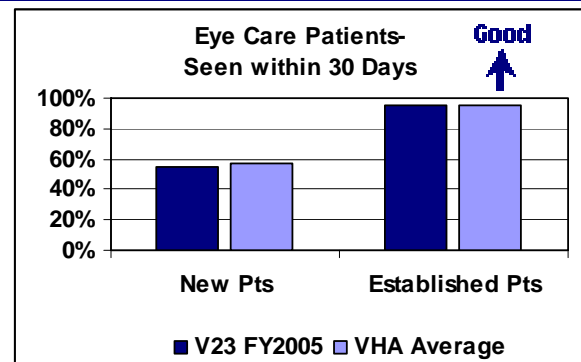
Primary & Specialty Medicine



Mental Health



Surgical/Specialty Care



Quality

VA Midwest Health Care Network's priority is to build a culture of continuous quality improvement. By continuously improving patient care, the Network strives to be a health care system where patients experience no needless deaths, no needless pain, no needless waste, no unwanted waits, and no feeling of helplessness during their health care treatment. The following performance measures help us monitor how well we are doing. Any measure below target leads to performance improvement action.

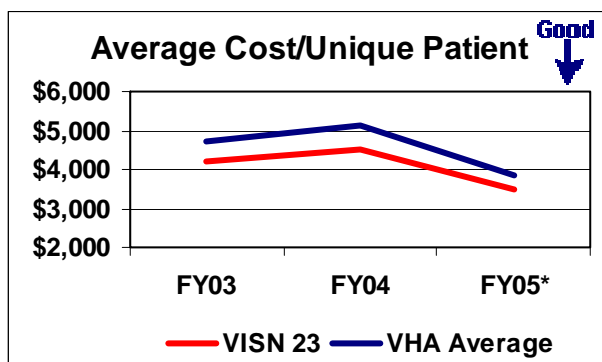
Performance Measure	FY2004 Results	Target	VA Avg	Best VISN	FY2005 Results	Status
Primary Care & Specialty Medicine						
Cancer Screening --% of patients receiving timely Colorectal Cancer screening test	64	72	75	80	76	Exceptional
Cancer Screening --% of Patients receiving Timely Cervical Cancer screening test	91	85	91	96	88	Exceeds Target
Heart Disease --% of Inpatients getting Electrocardiogram test within recommended time period	47	75	64	78	47	Below Target
*Heart Disease --% of patients with Heart Attack having "bad" cholesterol levels higher than VA standard	17	20	21	20	20	Meets Target
*Diabetes --% of Outpatients having lab tests indicating poor diabetic control in past year	14	15	15	9	9	Exceptional
Diabetes --% of Outpatients receiving recommended foot sensory exam	67	80	83	91	77	Below Target
Infectious Disease --% of Patients admitted for Pneumonia having previous Flu Shot	74	79	78	85	85	Exceptional
Infectious Disease --% of Patients admitted for Pneumonia having previous Pneumonia Shot	87	85	91	94	91	Exceptional
*Tobacco Use --% of Outpatients reporting tobacco use in the past 12 months	22	20	24	18	22	Meets Target
Surgical/Specialty Care						
Surgery-Infection Prevention --% of Inpatients having surgery getting timely antibiotics before surgery.	New	63	80	95	82	Exceptional
Extended Care & Rehabilitation						
Diabetes --% of Outpatients with blood pressure normal	New	72	79	89	74	Exceeds Target
*Diabetes --% of Outpatients having lab tests indicating poor diabetic control in past year	10	15	14	0	5	Exceptional
Infectious Disease --% of Spinal Cord Injury outpatients receiving Flu shot	74	79	65	76	61	Below Target
Infectious Disease --% of Spinal Cord Injury outpatients receiving Pneumonia shot	93	87	82	93	79	Below Target
*Tobacco Use --% of Spinal Cord Injury Outpatients reporting tobacco use in the past 12 months	29	31	31	20	34	Below Target
*Long Term Care --% of Nursing Home Care residents with little or no activity	12	13	5	2	7	Exceptional
Mental Health						
Substance Use Disorder --% of Outpatients tested or treated for alcohol use	80	90	93	96	93	Exceeds Target
*Tobacco Use --% of Mental Health Outpatients reporting tobacco use in the past 12 months	48	43	46	39	44	Below Target
Imaging						
Radiology --Timely results available to provider	75	90	73	94	91	Exceeds Target

Functional Status

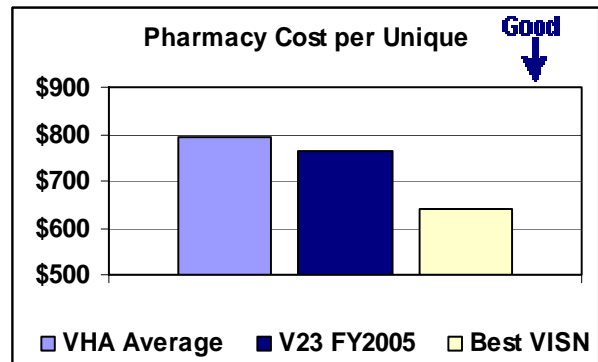
Performance Measure	FY2004 Results	Target	VA Avg	VA Best VISN	FY2005 Results	Status
Mental Health						
Homeless -% of patients discharged from a homeless program to stable housing	78	84	83	91	67	Below Target
Extended Care & Rehabilitation						
Geriatric & Extended Care -Number of patients in the Home and Community Based Care program	new	943	N/A	N/A	984	Exceeds Target
Rehabilitation -% of New Amputee, Stroke, Traumatic Brain Injury patients with assessments recorded in the functional status database.	72	76	85	89	79	Exceeds Target

Cost

Average Cost Per Patient



Pharmacy Costs



Major Initiatives

VA Midwest Health Care Network's strategic planning priorities include major initiatives in Care Coordination and Home Tele-Health.

Care Coordination includes three main elements: Home Tele-Health, Care/Case Management, and Disease Management. Each element provides a unique experience for veteran patients. Most importantly, Care Coordination provides the right care at the right time and in the right location. Through the use of technology, Care Coordination uses Home Tele-health to link veterans with care givers at the VA Medical facilities.

Home Tele-Health places advanced technology in the veteran's home to link the veteran with a Care Coordinator at a VA Medical Center. Care Coordinators can remind veteran's to take medication, monitor blood pressure, and modify treatment plans and medications based on readings submitted by patients.

Tele-Radiology uses advanced technology so that physicians at any site can view radiology films performed at another site. This technology provides timely care and avoids test duplications.

Tele-Health is the use of telecommunication and information technology to link veterans living in highly rural areas with specialists, including surgeons and mental health professionals. Innovative programs in this Network include post-operative examinations for patients in Fargo with surgeons in Minneapolis; digital eye screening to detect diabetic retinopathy; and accessible mental health professionals at community based outpatient clinics.

Focus on the Future

VA Midwest Health Care Network's focus on the future includes initiatives on quality, collaborative learning, continuous improvement, saving and rehabilitating lives, and implementing VA's May 2004 Capital Asset Realignment for Enhanced Services (CARES) decision.

Chronic Disease Management

- Chronic Obstructive Lung Disease
- Congestive Heart Failure
- Obesity
- Diabetes
- Depression
- Dementia

Collaborative Learning Initiatives

- Advanced Clinic Access
- ICU Collaborative
- Clinical Team Communication Collaborative
- Administrative ACA
- Surgical Site Infection Collaborative

Creating a Culture of Continuous Improvement Initiatives

The Network Care Work Place

- Work is done in teams
- Team members regard each other as peers
- Teams are empowered
- Teams have data about cost, quality, satisfaction, and access
- Teams use a Continuous Improvement Process
- Teams have time to do their work
- Teams work collaboratively

Institute for Health Care Improvement Saving 100,000 Lives Campaign

- Prevention of Ventilator Pneumonia
- Prevention of Central Line Infection
- Rapid Response Teams
- Medication Reconciliation
- Prevention of Surgical Wound Infection
- Treatment of Acute Myocardial Infarction

Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center

In February 2005, VA designated four VA Medical Centers (VAMCs) as Polytrauma Centers to reflect more accurately the type of services provided. Polytrauma may include traumatic brain injury, amputations, blindness, and mental health services. The Minneapolis VAMC is one of the four designated VA Polytrauma Centers. The others are located in Tampa, Florida; Palo Alto, California; and Richmond, Virginia. The Minneapolis VAMC has consolidated Polytrauma rehabilitation specialty services to one area of the medical center and is expected to open the Polytrauma Rehabilitation Center (PRC) in February 2006. The Center is already getting local and national recognition for its outstanding service to seriously ill veterans.

CARES Initiatives

Major Construction Projects

Minneapolis, MN – Build Spinal Cord Injury Unit – construction is planned 2006-2007. Approved funding = \$20.5M.

Des Moines, IA – Building Nursing Home Care Unit, Rehabilitation Domiciliary Beds – construction is planned for 2006-2007. Approved funding = \$25M.

Iowa City, IA – VAMC Specialty Care Addition – concept paper for the project has been approved and project will compete for funding in fiscal year 2008. Total project estimate = \$25M.

Fargo, ND – Specialty Care Building – application for this project will compete for funding in fiscal year 2009. Total project estimate = \$10M.

Omaha, NE – Heating Ventilation and Air Conditioning System (HVAC) – concept paper to correct HVAC system and clinical space deficiencies has been approved and the project will compete for funding in fiscal year 2008. Total project estimate = \$96M.

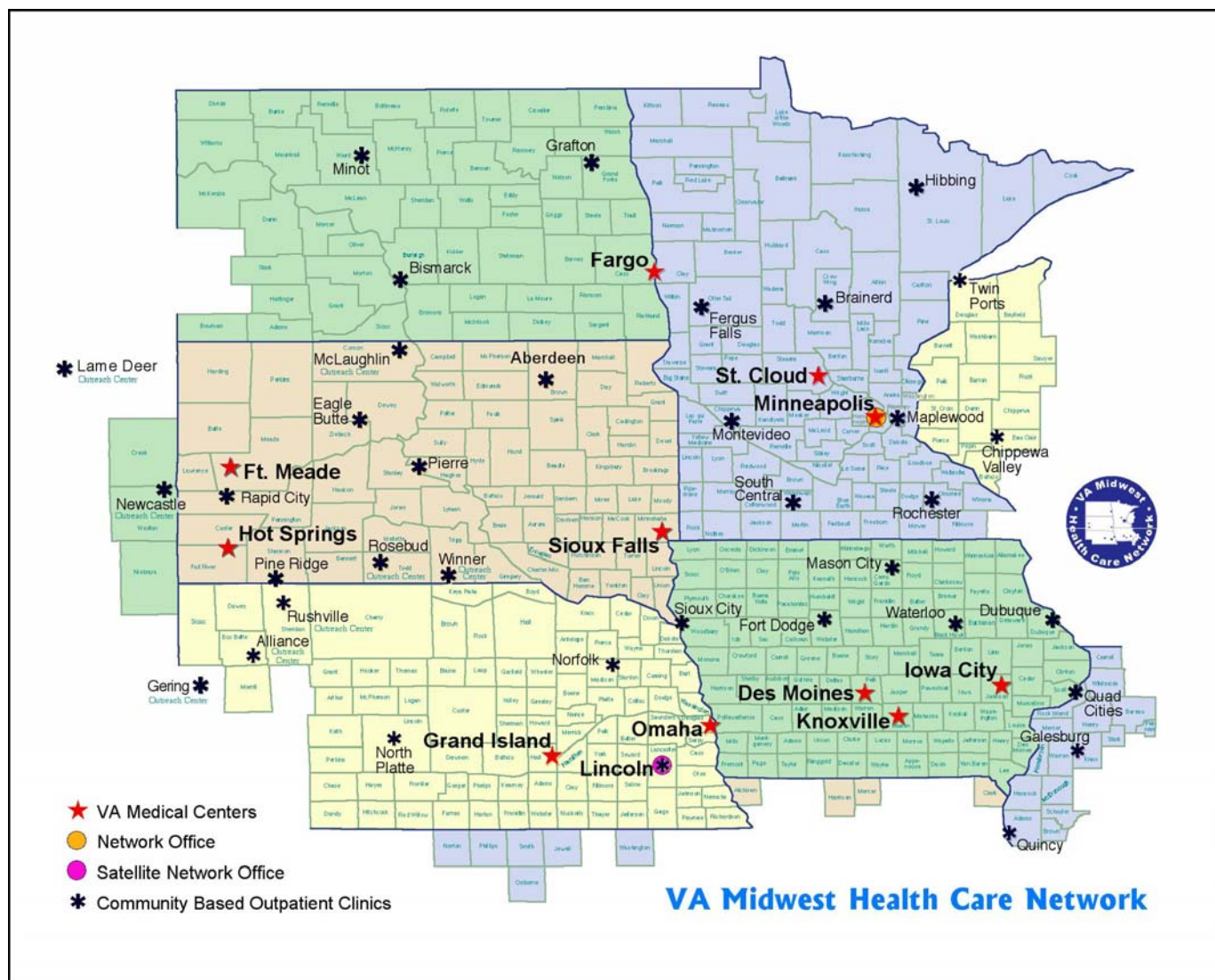
CARES Collaboration with Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)

- Des Moines Regional Office relocation – VBA funded. Design is ongoing. Construction to begin in May 2006.
- St. Paul Regional Office enhanced use lease is proposed and the Office of Management and Budget is reviewing the proposal.

CBOCs through CARES

VISN 23 had twenty-one (21) CBOCs approved in the CARES decision. CBOCs are expected to increase access, meet future outpatient demands, and relieve space constraints at existing VA medical sites of care.

Strategic priorities are being reviewed and the Network is awaiting guidance from VA Central Office on opening new CBOCs in 2006.



Veterans Benefits Administration (VBA)
VA Regional Offices (VARO)
Located within VISN 23

VA Regional Offices (VARO) provide non-medical benefits administration. Some of the benefits handled include disability compensation for injuries or diseases that happened or were worsened while on active duty, disability pensions for wartime veterans with limited income and no longer able to work, vocational rehabilitation, life insurance, and home loan guaranty. For a more comprehensive listing of all VA Benefits log on to www.va.gov or to speak to someone about veterans benefits call 1-800-827-1000.

State of Iowa

VA Regional Office
210 Walnut Street
Des Moines, Iowa 50309

State of Minnesota

VA Regional Office
Bishop Henry Whipple Building
1 Federal Drive
Fort Snelling, MN 55111

State of Nebraska

VA Regional Office
5631 South 48th Street
Lincoln, Nebraska 68516

States of North Dakota and South Dakota

Dakotas Regional Offices
2101 Elm St.
Fargo, ND 58102

P.O. Box 5046
Sioux Falls, SD 57717

**Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
Veteran Readjustment Counseling Centers
Vet Centers Located within VISN 23**

State of Nebraska

Vet Center
Norm McCormick, Team Leader
2428 Cuming Street
Omaha, NE 68131
402-346-6735

Vet Center
Larry Obrist, Team Leader
920 L Street
Lincoln, NE 68508
402-476-9736

State of Iowa

Vet Center
Katina Mach, Team Leader
2600 MLK Parkway
Des Moines, Iowa 50310
515-284-4929

Vet Center
Terry Goodell, Counselor
1642 42nd Street NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52404
319-378-0016

Vet Center
Dick Jorgensen, Team Leader
1551 Indian Hills Dr., Suite 204.
Sioux City, Iowa 51104
712-255-3808

State of Illinois

Vet Center - Quad Cities
Pleshette Butler, Team Leader
1529 46th Ave
Moline, Ill. 61265
309-762-6954

State of South Dakota

Vet Center
Gary Johnson, Team Leader
621 6th St. Suite 101
Rapid City, SD 57701
605-348-0077

Vet Center
Nicholas Rinehart, Acting Team Leader
601 South Cliff Ave, Suite C
Sioux Falls, SD 57104
605-330-4552-

State of North Dakota

Vet Center
Jim Tougas, Acting Team Leader
3310 Fiechtner Dr. SW
Fargo, ND 58103
701-237-0942

Vet Center
James Sauvageau, Team Leader
2041 3rd Street NW
Minot, ND 58701
701-852-0177

Vet Center
Jerome Feist, Counselor
1684 Capital Way
Bismarck, ND 58501
701-224-9751

State of Minnesota

Vet Center
Phil Ringstrom, Team Leader
405 East Superior Street
Duluth, MN 55802
218-722-8654

Vet Center
Ernest Boswell, Team Leader
2480 University Ave.
St. Paul, MN 55114
651-644-4022

**VA MIDWEST HEALTH CARE NETWORK (VISN 23)
VA MEDICAL CENTERS
ELIGIBILITY AND ENROLLMENT OFFICES**

NORTH DAKOTA

Fargo VA Medical Center
Eligibility and Enrollment (136B1)
2101 N. Elm St.
Fargo, ND 58102
(800) 410-9723, ext. 3427 or 3428

SOUTH DAKOTA

Sioux Falls VA Medical Center (OOB)
2501 West 22nd St.
PO BOX 5046
Sioux Falls, SD 57117
(800) 316-8387 ext. 6314

VA Black Hills Health Care System

BUS-13 Patient Services
113 Comanche Road
Fort Meade, SD 57741
(800) 743-1070, ext. 7101

BUS-13 Patient Services
500 N. 5th Street
Hot Springs, SD 57747
(800) 764-5370 ext. 2043

NEBRASKA

**VA Nebraska Western Iowa Health
Care System (136A)**
600 South 70th St
Lincoln, NE 68510-2493
(800) 451-5796 ext. 6255 or 6258

**VA Nebraska Western Iowa Health
Care System (136A)**
4101 Woolworth Avenue
Omaha, Nebraska 68105
(800) 451-5796 ext. 4056 or 3244

**VA Nebraska Western Iowa Health
Care System (136A)**
2201 North Broadwell Avenue
Grand Island, NE 68803
(888) 451-5796 ext. 2483 or 2167

MINNESOTA

Minneapolis VA Medical Center
Patient Access Center (PAC)
One Veterans Drive
Minneapolis, MN 55417
(866) 414-5058 ext 2071 or
(612) 725-2071

St. Cloud VA Medical Center (136A)
4801 Veterans Drive
St. Cloud, MN 56303
(800) 247-1739 ext. 6587

IOWA

Iowa City VA Medical Center (136A)
601 Hwy 6 West
Iowa City, IA 52246
Illinois (800) 346-1843 ext. 7141
Iowa (800) 637-0128 ext. 7141

Central Iowa Health Care System
3600 – 30th St (OAS-D5)
Des Moines, IA 50310
(800) 294-8387 ext. 5888

1515 W. Pleasant St (OAS-K5)
Knoxville, IA 50138
(800) 816-8878 ext. 5018

For more information about the Department of Veterans Affairs
or VA Midwest Health Care Network
go to www.va.gov or www.visn23.med.va.gov